2: Hutchinson E-4.6 (1950-1951) 1957 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11

VILA RECONCAVO

[Town Life]

were included in Group 4 because they worked for a nonprofit charitable institution.

Occupationally, the town dwellers differ sharply from the people of the rural area of the community. Their work rarely requires them to go out of town to the rural area. Of the entire working force of the town, only twelve men are employed in the sugar industry. Even during the harvest season, the town does not supply men to work in the cane fields or the factory. However, the few people in town who have mules occasionally rent them to planters during the harvest season to help carry the cane. The twenty-five petroleum workers have to leave town each day for work, but their work is also very different from that of any of the rural dwellers.

In the town, as on the plantations, there is specialization and division of labor. Among the fishermen, each man fishes constantly with one or two types of net. Change from one type of net to another is unusual and disliked. A fisherman seldom supplements his fishing by planting a garden. Instead, he depends upon his catch of fish to give him enough money to buy garden produce, as well as meat and manufactured articles. In his turn, the gardener never fishes, depending upon the returns from his garden to buy what he does not produce.

Daily routine for the fisherman varies considerably because it depends closely upon the tides, while the daily routine of merchants, teachers, and bureaucrats, as well as household servants and craftsmen, follows a more citylike pattern, beginning at about seven in the morning and ending late in the evening. There is also less seasonal variance in the work of the town dwellers, for it does not depend upon the planting and harvesting of crops as does that of the rural workers.

The town and plantation ways of life also vary considerably with respect to paternalism, which plays a much smaller part in the life of the town dweller. Most of the municipal bureaucrats have patrons among the rural landowners who have placed them in their bureaucratic positions. Bureaucrats, in turn, are to a smaller extent the patrons of people living in the town, particularly of their household servants. Although they have neither the financial resources nor the prestige to provide the security which a rural landowner can offer his people, they do what they can to help whenever asked. This help often takes the form of asking their own patrons for help

2: Hutchinson E-4, 5 (1950-1951) 1957 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11
VILA RECÔNCAVO

[Town Life]

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for another person. In this way paternalism helps to link the two subcultures together. Nevertheless, the town subculture is much more of a money culture, and in general the people of the town are more independent than those of the rural area.

2: Hutchinson E-4, 5 (1950-1951) 1957 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11

VILA RECÔNCAVO

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ter) and homens de côr (men of color) including a few pretos (blacks).

Most individuals in this class are conscious of their "superiority" over the bulk of the town population, because of their higher economic status, the kind of work they do (usually white-collar), their better educations, better family traditions, and whiter, or at least lighter, skins. They are conscious of the fact that they are at the top of the scale on the local scene, and that to go any higher is impossible in the town. To do this they would have to move to a city. If one had a special ability he might be able to improve his condition in a large city, but he might also remain unrecognized. In the town he is the "big frog in the little pond," and this seems to give a certain amount of satisfaction to many.

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People of Class B seek to maintain favorable relations with the rural landowners, who dispense the municipal patronage and have the contacts in Salvador necessary to influence federal and state appointments, since members of their families are frequently state and federal government representatives.

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Only the merchants of Class B are in a relatively independent position, for they can operate independently of politics. Their market is the town population and is in no way dependent upon trade or patronage from the planters or their workers. There are no traditional merchant families in Vila Recôncavo. All contemporary storekeepers are persons who have worked their way up from fishing or some other activity to storekeeping.

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This class is slowly growing, and there are certain standards to which all its members conform, such as living in the old part of town, dressing with more care than the lower classes, supporting the church and patronizing the few religious holiday celebrations, sending their children to Salvador for their secondary education, owning radios, good dishes and furniture, displaying family solidarity and good manners, and maintaining a good relationship with members of Class A. But there is little or no cohesion among members of the group. They seldom act as a unit or express a group opinion (except to condemn candomblé, the local variation of African cultism).

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The social life of these people is definitely limited and to some extent follows the same pattern as that of the rural members of the same class, in that the men go out more than do their wives. The women of this group remain at home most

Hutchinson E-4,5 (1950-1951) 1957 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11

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157 ers have some positive qualities. People arrange their preferences in many ways, according to the physical qualities they wish to emphasize.

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557 There is also a series of expressions used by everyone to describe the person who is trying to appear white. It is almost axiomatic that whoever tries to be what he is not is considered ridiculous by all. Both whites and Negroes gossip about the social climber and use the terms "tem pinta" (has a "touch of the tarbrush"), or "tem sangue" (has Negro blood), or "é da raça" (is of the Negro race), or simply "besta" (show-off), "cheio de arte" (artful), "cheio de manha" (full of little tricks), or "fala bonito" (talks pretty).

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578 There are also many phrases used by lower-class people to ridicule Negroes and mestiços who are showing off, or "pushing." Most of these start off with Negro:

Negro doesn't marry, he gets together.
Negro doesn't accompany a procession, he runs after it.
Negro doesn't sit down, he squats.
Negro in white clothes is a sign of rain.
Negro doesn't hear Mass, he spies on it.
Negro at a white man's party is the first to grab and the last to eat.
Negro's intelligence is the same size as his hair.

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125 The concepts and fixed ideas which the people of Vila Recôncavo have of these racial types were also revealed in their responses to a pictorial questionnaire devised in the field. A series of eight photographs were shown. These were of people unknown to those answering the questionnaire. They consisted of a male and a female representative of each of the four major racial types, the caboclo, the preto, the mulato, and the branco. An attempt was made to keep the photographs from giving any clue to the possible class position of the eight persons. However, the photographs we were able to secure were not entirely satisfactory for our purposes in Vila Recôncavo. [159] The picture of the caboclo male was that of a middle-aged man, but of a type considered locally as having a strong personality, while the caboclo woman was older and certainly not simpatica (pleasant) in the local view. The two pretos were both unmistakably pretos, and both young. The mulato male and female differed one from the other, for the man was definitely a common mulato type, while the woman was almost

[Class A Families]

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596 the first thing done on making new acquaintances is to inquire
[178] into their family background and place them mentally on the
[571] appropriate social level.

As a rule each extended family has a head, usually the oldest male. He is recognized by the rest of the family as the leader, and few things are done by them without his knowledge and advice. The head of the Jacuipe family is the eldest son of Dona Yayá. He has made his home in Rio de Janeiro and has not lived in Salvador for a long time. Nevertheless, he is informed of all that goes on within the family, and no serious step would be taken by any member without his counsel. On the local scene, however, it is his next younger sister who has taken the family lead in all social activities. It is she who sees to it that the family is represented at any function where it is a duty to appear. Among the Condes, the Colonel is still the family head in spite of his age and infirmity. For many years his eldest son showed himself capable of taking charge of the sugar mill and of the family fortunes as well, but since his untimely death none of the other sons has shown such vigor, and in the long run major decisions are left to the old gentleman.

[594] In the conjugal households, however, decisions and actions are made jointly by the married partners. Unless the action is a very serious one which might affect the rest of the family, they need by no means seek advice from the family head. The family leader has no strong control over the other members of the family; rather, he is someone to whom they can go if they need advice. Also, if any member of the family is in difficulties of any sort, the rest of the group rallies around him under the direction of such a person. Because of the many positions in public life occupied by members of these extended families, the family is able to muster considerable pistolão ("pull") in many fields. Requests are frequently made,
•[557] especially to aid lower-class people who look to the various family members as patrons. A call here or there by the recognized leader of a large extended family can be a great assistance in getting someone into the already crowded hospitals, in helping with a will which has become entangled in legal difficulties, in getting a young man into the Air Force, and in the myriad other things which arise in this very personalized culture.

[73] The cohesiveness of the extended family also acts to take
[589] care of the aged, infirm, widowed, and unmarried. Not infre-

4: Pierson Z-4, 5 (1935-1937) 1967
SOll Bahia Brazilians SOll
BRAZIL SLI

the mulatto women profited by the myth of the sexual potency of the hybrid,[15] the high mortality of white women (especially during the nineteenth century), and the consequent successive marriages of elderly patriarchs who sought an increasing degree of sexual stimulation. Cases of "marriages of elderly white men from illustrious families, descendants of barons and well situated in life, with beautiful octoroon, quadroon, or mulatto women who carried themselves like fine ladies and gave evidence of a sexual ardor beyond the ordinary,"[16] increasingly occurred.

Today, the mixed-bloods are gaining a constantly increasing measure of social recognition. Among them are to be found prominent lawyers, jurists, physicians, engineers, politicians, diplomats, priests, educators, business and commercial magnates, musicians, painters, poets, novelists, journalists, planters.[17] In other words, the mulattoes have now penetrated to the top of the class scale.[18]

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not consented to their marriage with men for whom they had come to feel a sentimental or sexual predilection" (*ibid.*, pp. 156–57). Note also the novel *O mulato* (3d ed.; Rio, 1889), by Aluisio de Azevedo, whose hero is a mixed-blood *bachard* educated in Europe and enamored of a white girl from a family "full of prejudices of white purity." Gilberto Freyre calls this book "a human document warm with the life of the time."

[15] A popular saying commonly heard in Bahia is: "A white woman for marriage, a Negro woman for work, a *mulata* for sexual intercourse."

[16] Freyre, *Sobrados e mucambos*, p. 337.

[17] See Lacerda, *op. cit.*, pp. 381–82; Manoel de Oliveira Lima, *The Evolution of Brazil Compared with that of Spanish and Anglo-Saxon America* (Palo Alto, 1914), p. 39; Rudiger Bilden, "Laboratory of Civilization," *Nation*, CXXVIII (January 16, 1929), 73; Thomas Ewbank, *Life in Brazil* (New York, 1856), p. 267; Professor and Mrs. Louis Agassiz, *A Journey in Brazil* (Boston and New York, 1888), p. 124; Theodore Roosevelt, "Brazil and the Negro," *Outlook*, CVI (February, 1914), 409.

[18] To accelerate his social climbing, the mixed-blood has developed certain characteristic personality traits: "a pleasant smile and manner, a cordial

4: Pierson Z-4, 5 (1935-1937) 1967
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BRAZIL SLI

In all probability, the movement was at first largely vertical. When, however, the mixed-blood had gained some economic or professional competence, had definitely established his personal worth, he tended to be recognized as an "exceptional" individual; that is, as a person rather than as a member of a group. As the numbers of these "exceptional" individuals multiplied, the social conventions were subjected to constantly increasing pressure, since it is difficult to treat "exceptional" individuals in situations of intimate social intercourse differently from the way they are treated in intellectual, commercial, or political circles. This "strain for consistency" tends in time to modify conduct.[39]

Thus, as the mixed-bloods rose in class, this upward movement was accompanied by what might be called "horizontal progression." The individual who was rising in rank and establishing himself in the upper intellectual and economic circles began actually to penetrate the "inner sanctuaries" of the more exclusive social groups, breaking down marriage and familial taboos. The class tradition, in so far as it had been fixed by race, gradually began to give way under the irresistible pressure exerted upon it by the rising mulatto group.

This rise was accompanied by the personal stresses and strains which an individual in the process of moving from one class to another ordinarily experiences. The first mulattoes to penetrate the upper tiers reflected in their personal

show of hospitality, the use of diminutives as a means of being both respectful and intimate at the same time" (Freyre, *Sobrados e mucambos*, pp. 357-58).

[39] Moreover, class interests tended to become more and more important and eventually to bind members of the same class with common bonds of sentiment, attitude, and idea, and thus to cut across lines of color or of racial descent.

4: Pierson Z-4, 5 (1935-1937) 1967
SOll Bahia Brazilians SOll

CHAPTER VII

THE PRESENT ETHNIC COMPOSITION OF THE CLASSES IN BAHIAN SOCIETY

TODAY one finds at Bahia a freely competitive order in which individuals compete for position largely on the basis of personal merit and favorable family circumstance. Individual competence tends to overbalance ethnic origin as a determinant of social status.

However, the darker portion of the population, as we have already noted, have had to contend with the serious handicap that their parents or grandparents or other immediate ancestors began on the bottom as propertyless slaves of the white ruling class and now bear constantly with them, by reason of color and other physical characteristics, indelible badges of this slave ancestry, ineradicable symbols of low status. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that the relatively unmixed blacks are still concentrated in the low-pay, low-status employments and that they gradually disappear as one ascends the occupational scale, until in the upper levels they are seldom to be found.

But the mixed-bloods, especially the lighter mulattoes, evidence a strong tendency to climb the occupational ladder. Although the darker individuals still occupy very largely the low-pay employments, the lighter mulattoes tend to be concentrated in the middle tier; while a considerable portion, especially of very light mixed-bloods, or *brancos da Bahia*, as they are sometimes called, have penetrated into the upper strata.

[SALVADOR]

175 178 *563 555 /40 cont./ These marriages increased after Independence, in 1822, with the social ascent of mulattoes, military men, bureaucrats, lawyers graduated from Portuguese and French universities, a process which was intense under the Brazilian monarchical regime and to which Bahia contributed liberally with statesmen and politicians coming from these groups (2).

2. G. Freyre, op. cit., III, p. 951.

178 *563 626 584 593 Social pressure against mixed marriages seems to have decreased with time, and so the latter became more numerous every day. Formerly the families of high society or of the bourgeoisie verified the origin of fiancés with great care. Many marriages came to grief because one of the future partners was found to belong to the "caste." The unions that were formed against the parents' wish were the cause of lasting quarrels between parents and children, and gave rise to veritable domestic tragedies. Many fathers cursed their daughters and disinherited them when they persisted in wanting to marry a man of "inferior quality," especially if he were a bastard. "In our day," a female informant told us, "one has it much easier." This indeed seems to be the general opinion.

*563 ●557 The mixed marriage is greatly sought after because it confers prestige on the one of the two partners who is darker. A black professor made the remark to us that there are few colored men who, in marrying a light woman, think of "improving the race," but rather they hope to facilitate their own social ascent. Proof of this is the frequency with which this intention is /41/ implicitly indicated or even acknowledged. A colored employee flirts with white boys "for fun"; in fact, she is trying to get the man she wants, and she announces that she will never marry a man of dark color unless he is rich and well situated. Her mother approves entirely when she announces that she will not accept the advances of a man of dark color. Her three sisters have married Whites, and one of them is proud of her children who are blond. A student of the same physical type "prefers" moreno suitors, but admits that she would have no objection to marrying a White.

[SALVADOR]

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*563 A young mulatto student boasts of already having had eight
• 557 flirtations with women lighter than he, except for one, which he illustrates by showing photographs of three of them. There are even some who speak of a Black who is supposed to have a very large sum in reserve in order "to buy a white husband." She declares that "she would never make any efforts to marry"; she will marry if that is her destiny, and she claims to have received advances from both Blacks and Whites, but to have rejected all of them. "I have no preference as to type; I demand only that he be a cultivated man and one who corresponds to my ideal." And as if she had unconsciously given herself away, she says that during a journey she met a German -- the most characteristic type of fino White for the people of Bahia -- who paid her court and who since then had written her numerous letters. Also very characteristic is what a young mulattress said: "The dark girls prefer lovers lighter than they. Myself, if I sought to marry..." She does not finish her sentence, but after a pause she adds: "It depends, for if I wanted to have a lover I would not consider color." And as if she were voicing a complaint: "The colored boys prefer light women," she says, "even if they are ill-bred; it is enough for them that they are light..."

The resentment that these difficulties cause in girls is generally dissimulated by an apparent detachment with regard to marriage. A woman of liberal profession asserts that she does not want to marry because she is of restless temperament. Moreover, she adds, the colored men want to marry white women and the Blacks that she has been able to associate with are mentally inferior to her, which may be perfectly true. The same frustrations are found among the men who do not happen to have white fiancées. One of them lives with a mulattress, but he says that he knows more than one white woman or morena who would accept him as a husband or even as a lover. Two very black Blacks declare that they do not wish to marry, at any rate they do not find white girls who love them. Another complains that the women do not want /42/ dark men, even well-bred ones, and prefer a White, even a poor devil badly "rigged out"; in the streets they repulse

[SALVADOR]

/42 cont./

*563 the advances of dark men, but accept those of Whites, however
• 557 disrespectful. That is why, he explains, they either become concubines of the latter, or else they do not marry.

*563 The white and blond woman, on the other hand, is represented
829 as being strongly attracted by men with a very pigmented skin. A
826 light mulatto, regarded very highly in his profession, is not at-
832 tracted by dark women, although he admits that they are striking and pretty; he prefers the "Whites, very white." According to what he said, many men of his kind have this same inclination, quite independently of the idea of "purifying the race." He adds that the finas Whites have a real taste for the Blacks, whom they consider particularly virile and strong, and they do not take those who have manners that are too refined. Other informants, on the contrary, speak without enthusiasm of this type of women, whom they consider cold and frail. "Color gives health," says one of them, and he adds that even the Whites think so. "Very light women are repugnant to some men," declares one métis: "I even know a European who has an inclination to vomit when he sees one of them." All these opinions on the very white woman are
[191] of the same order as those that in the United States, according to John Dollard (1),

> 1. "It seems possible that the image of the white woman is in part preserved from sexual thoughts and allusions of the same order, while the black woman tends to bear the entire brunt of uncontrolled sexual desire... If the black women are represented as sexually desirable in the white popular imagination, the black men are represented as particularly
> [113] virile and experienced in this domain." Caste and Class in a Southern Town, New York, 1949, p. 1 ff.

serve as protection against colored men and sometimes even against Whites. The morena, moreover, is regarded as the most ardent feminine type and even, sexually speaking, the most accessible. Numerous informants who have a plan to marry Whites explain or imply that they are looking for light, socially white métisses.

[SALVADOR]

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*563 59 being greatly influenced by the family of the bride, the husband is inevitably absorbed by it, so that the children are actually more intimate with their grandparents on the maternal side than with those on the paternal side (2).

[124] [565]

2. In order to verify this hypothesis the author questioned 30 young women of lower and intermediate class, students of a professional school, and was thus able to verify that 63.3 o/o considered themselves more intimate with the family of their mother; 26 o/o did not express any preference; 6.6 o/o inclined to the paternal side, and 3 o/o did not know their ancestors.

*563 565 557 59 A White who is married to a dark woman thereby "leaves" his category, for, according to an oft-repeated maxim, "when a girl marries, her family gains a son." The man thus passes into the world of colored people from which his wife originated. Likewise, a dark man "elevates" himself by being integrated into the family of his light or white spouse. That is the opinion of the Bahians, an opinion that the author has been able to perceive and observe by participating in the local life. On the other hand, this is confirmed analogically by what occurs in marriages between persons of different rank and wealth. In Bahia, as throughout Brazil generally, marriages between "cultivated and upright" young men, even if they are poor, and wealthy women of high rank are much more approved than those of wealthy men with "lower class" women. In the case of the "cultivated and upright" young man (these two conditions are required), even if he is poor or colored, the family of the fiancée capitalizes on these virtues as compensation for his fortune or for his whiteness in the bartering that it does; in the opposite situation, the virtues that the poor or dark girl may have do not generally have /45/ the same power of compensation for the family of her spouse.

[SALVADOR]

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*563 555 that one may say that for more than 100 years Bahia has been governed "by Whites and by those who regard themselves as such" (1).

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1. Von Spix and von Martius, Através a Bahia, /Across Bahia/, 2nd edition, Bahia, p. 75.

/57/ The Bureaucracy

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● [557] In all the public administrations of Bahia one finds colored officials (especially in the modest posts). In the past, and even sometimes in our day, the officials were admitted through the influence of politicians or influential members of the administration itself. This is the way numerous dark officials were introduced in all the categories of the administration, without encountering any barrier or opposition. But well in advance of the governments of the States or the municipal services, the federal administration established a regime of competitive examinations in order to make up its ranks, even affecting purely bureaucratic positions. According to a métis who came into the bureaucracy in 1929, "in the federal civil service, there is no favoritism for the Whites, because the offices there are filled by competitive examinations, and there is no opposition to the registration of colored candidates. A well-bred, pleasant, competent Black or mulatto is accepted as associate or chief without opposition on the part of the Whites. Except when they are rude and when they take advantage of their position as departmental heads to make excessive unreasonable demands on Whites or Blacks, no one cares about their color."

With the perfecting of the system of competitive examinations, carried out by means of examinations in which the names of the candidates are not known by the members of the jury, an increasing number of persons of dark color are entering public service throughout Brazil, and cases of candidates who consider themselves victims of racial discrimination are rare. This system

[SALVADOR]

/57 cont./

*563 647 was introduced in the States and in the municipal services in such a way that possibilities are increasing for colored persons entitled to occupy these posts. Given the fact that in spite of this the support that a candidate may receive from a politician or a friend of an official is always very important, it is obvious that persons of more modest circumstances have more difficulty being appointed after having been admitted for the examinations; they are supposed to have even more difficulties obtaining offices that are advantageous or lead to first-rate positions. During the [195] [668] colonial period some of the participants in a popular revolution that broke out in Bahia, complaining that because they were pardos all promotion was denied them, tried to establish a regime of equality in which Whites, pardos, and Blacks, without distinction as to color, would be judged solely according to their abilities (1).

[113] 1. Alfonso Ruy, A primeira revoluçao social brasileira -- 1798 /The First Brazilian Social Revolution -- 1798/, 2nd edition, Bahia, 1951, p. 77.

[178] "In olden times," says one Black, "one never saw a moreno /58/ occupying a first-rate post," which is not altogether accurate, for the métis always had important positions in the administration of Brazil since the colonial period. Today, says another informant, [557] [555] [178] "the incompetent ones advance through influence; as for the others, they advance by their own merit, regardless of their color." He himself, in spite of his very dark color, manages sections in which Whites and Blacks work, and he knows that he is highly esteemed by his colleagues. Others think that the Blacks, although admitted without great difficulties, do not have access, save exceptionally, to positions of management which are temporarily occupied in commission through the individual choice of governors and higher officials. Two of our informants illustrate their assertion by citing the case of a Black "who worked a great deal dur- [665] ing an election campaign in favor of a party and who, in spite of